

MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL MEETING OF THE STR ADVISORY COMMITTEE
WEDNESDAY, JUNE 24, 2020 VIA WEBEX

I. CALL TO ORDER/ROLL CALL (5:33 pm)

Committee Members Present: Bruce, Nash-Hunt, Moran, Stockness
City Staff: Naffah

II. ITEMS FROM THE FLOOR

R. Clompus (Trinidad) stated that while he doesn't observe every post on Nextdoor, an online forum, he has noticed a number of comments made by residents expressing their concern about the lack of masks worn by tourists.

III. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

May 19, 2020

Motion (Moran/Nash-Hunt) to approve the May 19, 2020 minutes as submitted. Passed (4-0). Passed unanimously.

IV. AGENDA ITEMS

1. Discuss Staff Report on the "Re-opening" of STRs and Hotels in the City and How This Process is Proceeding:

Committee Member Discussion:

City Manager Naffah advised that out of 30 STRs, 28 have submitted reopening plans, and all of which have been approved and certified by the County and City. He further discussed how multiple emails have been sent to property managers regarding masks requirements. He explained that these emails included information such as advising that masks are required in all public spaces, except when within a distance of more than 6 feet outside. Additionally, the City sent an email that included a poster with information regarding mask requirements. It was made clear in the email that it is mandatory to display this sign (or something similar with the same information) posted on site. Furthermore, another email was sent to all businesses that included mask requirement information.

Committee Chair Bruce discussed how the lack of enforcement creates an environment where individuals (residents and visitors alike) are expected to comply without monitoring. He opined that this lack of enforcement makes the community rely on the use of peer pressure or refusal of service at businesses. He also echoed R. Clompus' (Trinidad) comment regarding citizens' use of Nextdoor to discuss their concerns/frustrations in regards to lack of mask use. Bruce questioned if there is anything else the City can do to promote safety. Naffah explained that the City has been granted extra shifts from the Humboldt County Sheriff's Department for enforcement.

Planning Commissioner and Committee member Stockness voiced that she is glad to hear that the City has received additional resources. She also discussed the need for signs regarding mask and social distancing requirements. Naffah responded explaining that a sign was proposed, but was voted down by the City Council because it did not fit the City's sign ordinance. He advised

that despite this, he has been working with the County and other cities about getting signs along the freeway. He noted that he wants three signs at the entrances into Humboldt County. Stockness stated that tourists are integral to the City's economy, but opined that tourists need to follow the rules. Committee member Nash-Hunt questioned if Naffah has noticed a mask (lack-of) problem. He advised that during the week (Monday - Thursday) he observes most people wearing masks.

Public Comment

None

Committee Member Discussion

No final comments.

2. Discuss Ordinance Violations and Develop a Possible Fine Structure for Specific Violations to be Included in the Good Neighbor Contract or Good Neighbor Brochure:

Committee Member Discussion

Committee Chair Bruce briefly went over the STR ordinance and discussed how specific penalties for specific violations can be integrated into the good neighbor contract. Planning Commissioner Stockness was in favor of the inclusion of fines.

It was also clarified that the good neighbor brochure is a shorter version of the good neighbor contract, and must be placed at all STR locations. However, the contract doesn't need to be present onsite. Committee member Moran clarified for the Committee that the good neighbor brochure and the good neighbor flyer are one in the same. Planning Commissioner Stockness advised that the flyer was originally called the good neighbor brochure, but was changed. Bruce suggested changing it back to the good neighbor brochure.

A discussion occurred between Committee members on how to list the penalties in the good neighbor contract and brochure, and how to have it posted at each STR location in order to make the visitor aware of the amounts. Committee member Nash-Hunt suggested the fine could be listed in a way that indicates that when the 1st infraction occurs the visitor(s) will be given a warning, but if it's not resolved the fine listed in the brochure will be charged and collected. Bruce advised that the ordinance indicates the suggested fine will start at \$200.00.

Moran voiced that his concern lies with who has jurisdiction on fining a visitor, such as in the case of a parking violation. He opined that it's not a property manager's responsibility to collect a fine for a parking violation, as the City is responsible for enforcing parking codes. Moran did clarify that it is the property manager's responsibility to enforce fines if a violation occurs inside the STR. If the violation occurs on public property, the City is responsible for collecting the fine. Committee member Nash-Hunt agreed with Moran because the property managers can't police what happens outside of the STR property, and added that she is hopeful that if the fines are listed infractions and complaints will be minimal.

Stockness questioned if a deputy can only enforce if he/she is on duty. City Manager Naffah advised that the deputy can only enforce the rules when on duty, but he is hopeful that fines can

be collected without having the deputy getting involved. Naffah advised that the goal is to have the owner/property manager collect the fine because the City does not hold a contractual agreement with the guest(s). In response, Moran reiterated that if a City ordinance is broken the City should collect the fine because it's on City property. Moran added that without law enforcement there is no documentation that a violation occurred. Naffah agreed.

A discussion regarding a security deposit insurance plan occurred.

Public Comment

R. Clompus (Trinidad) questioned if there was an appeal process if an infraction occurred and a fine was collected from the security deposit.

Moran responded that yes there is an appeal process.

Committee Discussion

A brief discussion amongst Committee members regarding an appeal process occurred.

Bruce suggested that the Committee could recommend the City Council modify the good neighbor contract and brochure/flyer, which would assign a minimum \$200 fine to get better compliance. However, he noted the issue is also how to collect the fine. Bruce suggested adding the fine amount under each violation. Stockness added that a fine will make a guest think twice about violating the rules.

Recommendation to list a \$200 fine for violating the rules of conduct in the contract and brochure was made.

Motion (Moran/Bruce) that Committee recommend the City Council add general language to the brochure (under good neighbor guidance) about the \$200.00 minimum fine for violation of the general rules of conduct, and that the City Council add specific language to the contract for each rule regarding the \$200.00 minimum fine while also requiring the guests to initial each rule in acknowledgement. Passed (4-0). Passed unanimously.

Moran advised that the Committee needs to explore the decision making process regarding whose jurisdiction it is to implement the fine, in order to make the decision fair and logical.

3. Per Council Resolution Authorizing STR Committee Purpose – “Analyze Benefits to Visitors,” and Discuss What is Working with the Ordinance as Currently Written:

Committee Member Discussion:

The Committee discussed the benefits to visitors, because as a Gateway City the City of Trinidad provides an opportunity for them to visit the California coast. The Committee discussed the benefits to the City, 1) T.O.T (second highest revenue source), 2) STRs are in compliance with the City's septic ordinances, 3) bolsters the economy for local businesses, and 4) eco-tourism allows for unique businesses to flourish (benefitting both residents and tourists).

Planning Commissioner Stockness made note that another benefit that came from the ordinance is that City residents receive a contact list for all of the STRs.

Committee member Moran made note that the ordinance is working, as there have been few complaints since going into effect. Bruce noted that some residents have indicated they have complaints, but advised that they have given up on notifying the City.

Public Comment

R. Clompus (Trinidad) stated that after examining the City's budget after the recent downturn, due to COVID, it is evident that the City of Trinidad's welfare, from a budgetary standpoint, is linked to STRs. Thus, if the City wants to continue to provide services to residents, TOT revenue is vital.

Committee Discussion

Committee member Nash-Hunt stated she is glad City residents can come to the Committee with concerns and have them addressed prior to going to the City Council.

Commissioner Stockness discussed the changes made due to the pandemic.

4. Discuss Definitions in the Ordinance and the Possible Need to Clarify or Improve Specific Definitions:

Continue at September 2020 meeting

V. Request for Future Items

Staff Report (Results from reopening and TOT status)

Discuss definitions in the ordinance and the possible need to clarify or improve specific definitions.

Discuss recommendations for possible revisions to the ordinance at its next revision date.

VI. Adjournment

Motion (Stockness/Moran) to adjourn. Passed (4-0). Passed unanimously.

Meeting adjourned at 7:35 pm. Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, September 15, 2020 at 5:30 pm.

Submitted by:

Approved by:

Angela Zetter
Administrative Assistant
(Transcribed via recording)



Dick Bruce
STR Committee Chair